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THEOSOPHY

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. LVIII 1969-1970

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I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*

II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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INDEX TO THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 58

NOVEMBER, 1969—OCTOBER, 1970

A

Affirmation, H.P.B.'s Strongest 193
Age Old Endeavor, The 75
Age to Age, From 1

B

Basis, Laying a 51
Buddhist Elements 146

C

Christian Scheme, The.....
.....14, 45, 83, 111, 146, 176, 201, 240, 267, 304, 334, 365

Comment, Letters, Questions.....
.....11, 42, 76, 105, 144, 173, 208, 235, 265, 300, 331, 362

Compensation, The Moral Law of 79

Conversations on Occultism 134, 165, 197, 228, 261, 294, 327, 358

Correspondence Class, Theosophical 5

Cycle Moveth, The 65

Cycles of Realization 289

D

Days of Preparation, The 321

Druzes, Hermeticists and 111

E

Editorials, Path 36, 102

Educator, William Q. Judge— 129

Endeavor, The Age-Old 75

F

From Age to Age 1

G

Gnostics and Church Fathers 176

H

Heal, The Power to 70
Helping Others, On 161
Heresies and Secret Societies 45, 83, 111, 146, 176
Hermeticists and Druzes 111
Hit the Mark 343
H.P.B.'s Strongest Affirmation 193

I

I A O (Heresies and Secret Societies) 83

J

Jesuitry and Masonry 201, 240, 267, 304, 334, 365
Jesus: Buddha, Jesus, Apollonius 14
Judge, Educator—William Q. 129

K

Karma and Reincarnation 353

L

Last Stronghold, The 238
Laying a Basis 51
Letters, Questions, Comment.....
.....11, 42, 76, 105, 144, 173, 208, 235, 265, 300, 331, 362
Life, Some Words on Daily 211
Lines of Work, The 225
Lookout, On the.....
.....23, 55, 88, 117, 153, 183, 215, 247, 278, 312, 345, 373

M

Man's Latent Powers 361
Masonry, Jesuitry and 201, 240, 267, 304, 334, 365
Moral Law of Compensation, The 79

N

Nazareans, Ophites and 45

O

Occultism, Conversations on 134, 165, 197, 228, 261, 294, 327, 358
Omens and Presentments 257
On Helping Others 161
On the Lookout.....
.....23, 55, 88, 117, 153, 183, 215, 247, 278, 312, 345, 373
Ophites and Nazareans 45

P

Path Editorials 36, 102
Power to Heal, The 70
Powers, Man's Latent 361
Preparation, The Days of 321
Presentments, Omens and 257

Q

Questions, Comment, Letters.....
.....11, 42, 76, 105, 144, 173, 208, 235, 265, 300, 331, 362

R

Reality of Moral Values 372
Realization, Cycles of 289
Reincarnation, Karma and 353

S

Screen of Time, The 108
Self, The 275
Self-Evolution 172
Some Words on Daily Life 211

T

That Thou Art 326
Theosophical Correspondence Class 5
"Theosophy Pure and Simple" 97

V

Vale of Human Life, The 264

W

Why We Do What We Do 33
William Q. Judge—Educator 129
Work, The Lines of 225

Gentleness brings victory to him who attacks, and safety to him who defends. Those whom Heaven would save, it fences round with gentleness. —*Tao Te King*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 58 NOVEMBER, 1969 NUMBER 1

FROM AGE TO AGE

THERE is probably no more obscure subject than the causal factors behind great historical cycles. In her article, "The Fall of Ideals," H. P. Blavatsky speaks of the general depression which results when the chaotic condition of the moral world makes sorry debris of the best human ideals, blinding all save a small minority to the high potentialities of human evolution. In such periods, where indeed can one gain support for hope, save from intuitive convictions coming from within? She goes on to suggest that changes may nonetheless come about quite suddenly, through swift-acting forces, yet of these, in their relationship to forthcoming periods of human awakening, the world can know nothing, except by recourse to the psychological history and scheme of evolution set forth in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Even for students, a grasp of how such cycles come about remains extremely difficult. At the level of common understanding, many factors seem to be involved. For example, in the *Gita,* Krishna informs Arjuna that He incarnates—"produces" himself among creatures—"whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world." Such Teachers then, by this implication, constitute a great "balance" principle in the moral destiny of mankind. But what other factors play a part? There must be, one would think, concomitants of a contrary character at a time of vice and injustice. For great Teachers also come when they can be *heard*. While they risk much, they make, we are told, no useless

sacrifice. Mr. Judge has written concerning the duty of the companions, suggesting how they may contribute to the formation of a new cycle:

> But, concretely, there is a certain object for our general work. It is to start up a new force, a new current in the world, whereby great and long-gone Gnanis, or wise ones, will be attracted back to incarnate among men here and there, and thus bring back the true life and the true practices.

It seems that a vast web of magnetic forces is involved in the unfolding of cycles, and how foolish to try to judge them, or to declare either optimistic or pessimistic conclusions, save from a height allowing insight into all the major causes at work. From any other stance, the phantasmagoria of current events will fill every sensitive heart with apprehension, until a strong faith is established in the words of those who teach "that the now *ideal* human perfection is no dream, but a law of divine nature; and that, had Mankind to wait even millions of years, still it must some day reach it and rebecome *a race of gods.*"

But who, it might be mournfully asked, could wait "millions of years"? Yet there exist those who have already waited for their younger brothers throughout such a period, and doubtless longer. The study of cycles as taught in Theosophy involves a timetable of human evolution very different from the guesses of modern anthropologists and having nothing in common with the insistent schedules of impatient political reformers. Achieving a sense of reality concerning the enormous lapses of time required by full human development is a primary obligation of those who aspire to qualify as helpers of the human race. The importance of this lesson is given by H.P.B.:

> As from time to time certain great characters appeared on earth who taught mankind to look beyond the veil of illusion, man learnt that the gulf was not an impassable one; that it is the province of mankind through its higher and more spiritual races to fill the great gap more and more with every coming cycle; for every man, as a unit, has it in his power to add his mite toward filling it.

The point of many of H.P.B's discussions, however, refers not to fulfillments long ages hence, but to the confusions and puzzling novelties which attend what in 1889 she spoke of as the "great psychic and spiritual change now taking place in the realm of the human soul." If we turn another of her statements in this article ("The

Tidal Wave") to a prophetic usage, we may be afforded light on the present scene:

> . . . the great change is not effected in solemn silence, nor is it perceived only by the few. On the contrary, it asserts itself amid a long din of busy, boisterous tongues, a clash of public opinion, in comparison to which the incessant, ever increasing roar even of the noisiest political agitation seems like the rustling of the young forest foliage, on a warm spring day.

H.P.B. might now alter the image, but her meaning would hardly change. No reader of current books and magazines can avoid the "din" of controversy over matters which, a few years ago, were hardly mentioned. In a world deeply shaken by manifest uncertainties, yet still in the grip of habits shaped by once-confident assumptions, all sorts of ominous and ill-defined insecurities arise, and there is, in consequence, a vast loosening of the hold of old beliefs. Wise intuitions about the nature of man, even if limited in application, command ever larger audiences, and books and articles elaborating liberating ideas are affecting the common language. Yet even while these wholesome and encouraging signs appear, the shallow intellectuality of the day and the universal tendency to package and offer for sale, seizes upon even the best of such ideas, attempting to turn them into clichés and slogans long before they are properly understood. All that H.P.B. says of the fate of the "inspired" religions in "Is Theosophy a Religion?" applies to this "processing" technique of the commercial popularizers.

Far more than in the nineteenth century, the world is now absorbed by the dynamics of market-place psychology, and the search after signs and wonders which prevailed in the psychism of a hundred years ago is now replaced with the expectation of miracles by psychological experts or by less reputable tricksters who easily learn how to fill the vacuum of unbelief and feed the uncontrolled longings of people who feel deserted by the breakdown of conventional authority. Truly, the "insurrection of vice and injustice" has a shrill orchestral accompaniment which plays in many keys!

Yet even here there are guidelines given by H.P.B. for recognizing the true and the good. Those who speak for a better future will strike an unmistakable note. They will be "the people's friends, the unselfish lovers of man, and the defenders of human right to the freedom of the spirit." Altruism will be the keynote of their work, the good of all the indispensable foundation of their vision. What

can be meant by Krishna, when he says that he comes "for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness," save that, *when* such a being comes, a time has arrived under cyclic provision in which moral and spiritual principles can achieve a measure of clear demonstration—be seen and understood by large numbers of mankind? For when Krishna speaks, does not the heart of all mankind gain voice? What then may be the content of the demonstration brought by the stirrings, and one day by the undeniable presence, of the Krishna principle? There are many mysteries concerning the incarnation of a Krishna, but the *reason* for his coming is not mysterious at all. He comes to teach the one truth which no soul can at last avoid, from which all other truths must grow. It is, in the words of W. Q. Judge: "He who does not feel irresistibly impelled to serve the Race, whether he himself fails or not, is bound fast by his own personality and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself* and not that body which he now occupies." Learning which gets in the way of this truth is only distraction.

FOUNT AND ORIGIN

Unity of everything in the universe implies and justifies our belief in the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious, showing the necessity and actuality of the connection of man and all things in the universe with each other; which knowledge, therefore, becomes essentially RELIGION, and must be called in its integrity and universality by the distinctive name of WISDOM-RELIGION.

It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual "Religions" (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THEOSOPHICAL CORRESPONDENCE CLASS

Work of the Class

A PAPER of general notes and comments on the questions and answers has been sent out to all members. Extracts from that paper are given below. The membership has risen to 300, and includes some Indian Section members. The work has done a great deal of good.

Question Paper No. 1

Question 1. Very well answered in general. The answers varied very much. Very few had a clear idea of what happens at death in regard to the physical body and Prana. When the Linga Sarira and higher principles leave the body, the "lives" which are controlled by the synthesizing power of the Ego during life begin to run riot, and Prana instead of acting in the body as a whole acts in the separate molecules, and thus causes disintegration. Disintegration being effected, Prana rebecomes Jiva.

(c) Man differs from the animals in the possession of Manas, not in the possession of the Triad, for Atma-Buddhi, the Monadic essence, is Universal and therefore in all kingdoms. There is, however, a difference between men and animals in respect to Atma-Buddhi, and that is, that man has a possibility in regard to these principles not possessed by the other kingdoms; he has the power to consciously rise to their plane. Besides Atma-Buddhi, the monadic essence, the principles which are common to all kingdoms are the four lower, *viz.,* Sthula Sarira, Linga Sarira, Prana, and Kama. Kama was omitted in most of the answers, but it is present even in the mineral kingdom, being manifested as chemical affinity. The distinction between the lower kingdoms, then, is not one of principles but rather of activity of the principles. It is understood that all the principles are in all kingdoms in a latent form, but in man Manas is added as active instead of latent. The activity of Prana constitutes the distinction between the vegetable and mineral kingdoms; Kama in addition becomes *active* in the animal kingdom, though, as said above, existing on all planes. As we rise from one kingdom to another there is a gradual unfolding of consciousness

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NOTE.—Two preceding articles on the "Theosophical Correspondence Class" appeared in October. The present article was first published in the *Path* August, 1894. No further accounts of the Correspondence Class have been discovered.

until in man self-consciousness is attained, this being the function of Manas.

Question 3. Many did not state the objects in full. The greatest omission was in the second object, by omitting the words "and to demonstrate the importance of such study," inasmuch as the study of those religions and philosophies is more important than the religions and philosophies in themselves; for such study reveals truth by presenting its many aspects as seen by different races.

Students should learn these objects word for word and also have a good definition of Theosophy, so that they may be able to give *accurate* information to enquirers and remove misconceptions.

It is interesting to compare the three objects of the T.S. with the three divisions under the heading of "The Higher Life" of the Buddhists. These are:

1. By an unremitting life of active altruism to realize the idea of non-separateness.
2. To substitute a life of study and analysis for all ceremonialism and exoteric worship.
3. To develop the psychic powers latent in man and get knowledge of the existence of subjective potent forces in Nature.

Question Paper No. II

Question 1. (a) Most of the answers to this question were incomplete, many consisting of little more than the simple statement that the seven-fold division is better than the three-fold because it enables us to analyse man's nature more fully. While this is true and is one of the main reasons for the adoption of the seven-fold division, yet as it stands it is only a statement, and we should know what is its basis. It must not be concluded, however, that the three-fold division is an incorrect one, for it can be made to include the whole man; it is simply too general. In this division of body, soul, and spirit, there is no place for hypnotic and spiritualistic phenomena; for, strictly speaking, these have to do in most cases neither with the physical body nor with the soul, and furthermore no full explanation is afforded of after-death states.

To be accurate, the body is only the physical outer covering through which man comes into contact with external nature, and since spirit is Universal, this therefore leaves only *soul* to represent man in his different aspects and varying functions on all the intermediate planes, astral, psychic, and manasic, and to include all the phenomena of thought, will, desire, and sensation. Hence, leaving

out the body, there is only one word to represent both the permanent and the impermanent parts of man's nature, and hence again a confusion arises between the illusory and the real, so that there is no true knowledge of what part of our nature should be cultivated and what part repressed. It is here that the advantage of the seven-fold division is apparent, for it enables us to give to *sensation* and *desire* their true places and to recognize to what extent they are necessary. It therefore enables us to know what man truly is and what is necessary for his highest development. Moreover, the seven-fold division shows man's relation to the other kingdoms of Nature and to the whole Universe. It is only by a consideration of this division that the facts of evolution can be accounted for, and only in this way is it possible to fully understand the distinctions existing between the different kingdoms of Nature. The seven-fold division allows for the progression from plane to plane, and links man to the whole of Nature.

(c) Some of the answers were very good, but by many the real idea of the question was not grasped. These stated that the metaphysical basis was the Absolute, or Parabrahm. While of course this is the One Reality that underlies everything, yet from such a statement we are no nearer understanding the Cosmos than we were before. The references given on the question paper to the *Secret Doctrine,* Vol. 1, pp. 269-299, show that the word metaphysical was used in its strict meaning, and a study of the word and its use would be profitable to all. The word Metaphysics is derived from the Greek *meta*—after, and *physica*—physics, from *physis*—nature. It is said that Metaphysics was the name given by Aristotle and his followers to the science of mind and intelligence. According to them, the science of natural bodies, or physics, came first in the order of studies and the science of mind came *after* this; and therefore the latter was called Metaphysics because it came *after* physics. Metaphysics applies to all inquiries seeking to discover the "first principles" of the constitution of existing things and particularly of our own nature. In this is included the nature of being and the attributes belonging to it as such, and therefore the metaphysical basis and constitution of the Universe is found in the noumena and the underlying causes of external nature, and in their relationship one to the other. In the metaphysics of the Esoteric Philosophy, Thought itself is considered a reality. Back of all manifestation is *Idea.* The whole manifested Universe is the expression of Thought. "Everything that

is, was, and *will be,* eternally IS, even the countless forms which are finite and perishable only in their objective, not their *ideal,* form. They existed as Ideas in the Eternity, and, when they pass away, will exist as reflections." The Universe is worked and guided from within outwards. The phenomenal is transitory, impermanent, and therefore illusory; the noumenal is the permanent, and therefore the real. (*Secret Doctrine,* Vol. 1, p. 282.)

Question 2. (a) Since Manas is the distinctive principle of Man, "lower man" must mean "lower Manas" in connection with the "lower nature" which, generally speaking, consists of those parts of our nature which are dissipated after death and which cannot be retained by the Ego. These are the instruments or vehicles through which the lower man acts and by means of which he comes into contact with external nature. More particularly the lower nature is Kama and the Astral body, for the physical body may be omitted since it neither feels nor acts of itself. The seats of sensation are in the Astral body; the physical is merely an instrument; to a great extent it is the result of Kama and is formed upon the model of the Astral.

(b) Kama is the middle principle in the septenary classification, and in conjunction with Lower Manas, or Kama-Manas, is the dominant principle in the humanity of to-day as a whole. Kama-Manas may be said to be the man as we know him, the personal man who stands at the middle point of the ladder of evolution, attracted upwards by his Higher Ego and pulled downwards by his lower nature. It is only through and by means of Kama that Lower Manas can act, hence the importance of an understanding of this principle. In the animal kingdom Kama is the highest active principle, acting normally and naturally according to laws; but in man it may become perverted, since in him to desire is added reason. Kama-Manas gives man power to become a god or a devil, or worse than a beast. It is only when Manas is developed, giving the power to reason, analyze, and choose, that the normal line of nature's evolution can be departed from, and that it is possible to work, as it were, contrary to Nature when that is considered mindless. Hence if Kama is allowed to rule in Man, his evolution is retarded; it is only by dominating and ruling Kama that he can rise spiritually, but if he does not awaken in himself the desire for spiritual things, he will be dragged downwards.

(c) The three qualities of nature were well described in general, but their relation to higher and lower man was not clearly given in the majority of answers. Of course this relation may be looked at from different points of view, and hence it would change accordingly, but the key-note seems to be given in Chapter XIV of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It is the three qualities that bring back the soul to rebirth; the Sattva, through attachment to knowledge and that which is pleasant; the Rajas, through the consequences produced from action; and Tamas, through heedless folly, sleep, and idleness. "And when the embodied self surpasseth these three qualities of goodness, action, and indifference, which are coexistent with the body, it is released from rebirth and death, old age and pain, and drinketh of the water of immortality." If we inquire which of the human principles it is that binds man to rebirth, we find it is Kama swaying Manas, and we may see a direct correspondence between the three qualities and the relations existing between Kama and Manas; Rajas will correspond to the principle Kama considered generally as the basis of all action; Sattva will correspond to Kama dominated and ruled by Manas; and Tamas to Kama when Manas is its slave, debased and degraded. The other references in the *Bhagavad-Gita* to the three qualities also support this view. It is Kama that connects the Ego or real man with the lower principles and with earthly life and nature. Kama and the three qualities are the link between Man and Nature. In the ordinary man now one, now another, of the qualities is uppermost; in the majority the Rajas quality prevails, but by a right use of this quality the Sattva may be reached. By constant effort we may acquire more and more of the Sattva quality of light and truth until it is the main-spring in our lives, and from this we may pass to the mastery of all the qualities and so escape rebirth.

Question 3. (a) (b) (c) The only point that it is necessary to refer to here is in regard to the sequence of, and relations between, the objects of the T.S.

The first has to do with right conduct, with ethics, and is for all; it is the one object that has to be subscribed to by all members and that all should endeavor to carry out. It has to do with our everyday life in the world, and should enter into all our relations with others.

The second and third objects, however, cannot be followed by everyone. Not everyone can take up the study of philosophy or of the deeper science of Man and Nature. Universal Brotherhood is a

fact in and a law of Nature, and it is man's blindness to this that causes all the suffering and misery in the world. The origin, spiritual and physical, of the whole of humanity and of Nature is One, their destiny is also One. There is abundance of evidence from all sides to show that "no man liveth unto himself," and it should be our aim as members of the T.S. to make ourselves acquainted with this evidence, and in this way fit ourselves to help on the movement. A pursuit of the second object supplies another argument for the Brotherhood of Man. From it we discover the identity of source of all the great world-religions, and are led to an acknowledgement of the fountain-head of all, the Wisdom-Religion. Furthermore it supplies that element in the life of man which Western thought has failed to give, *viz.,* a knowledge of the Soul and of the possibilities of consciousness on the inner, spiritual planes.

The first object teaches right living based on the fundamental relation of man to man; the second leads us to right thinking, it gives us a knowledge of ourselves; the third is the application of that knowledge to the hidden side of nature and the inner life of man; it is the preliminary step in occultism. The first and second objects are rightly preliminary to the third; before the student can safely take up the third object, he must first learn unselfishness, the living for others, the practical side of Universal Brotherhood; he must acquire charity of thought, impartiality, and freedom from bias, and be able to recognize Truth in whatever garb it may be presented; then he can rightly turn to Nature and seek to know her secrets and those of his own inner being.

The relation between Theosophy and Occultism was not clearly given in some instances. Properly speaking, Theosophy in its fullest sense includes Occultism, for it is the Wisdom-Religion and must include all knowledge; but as generally understood Theosophy is the presentation of Truth about Man and Nature; Occultism is the science of the hidden forces in Man and Nature and the development of latent powers. Theosophy is a collection of Truths, it is the statement of Truth, but if a student would verify this statement he must become an Occultist; real proof can be obtained in no other way.

letters • questions • comment

Why is it impossible for the mind of man to understand the Absolute? Does that mean we can never understand it? Cannot the limitations set in a particular life be overcome?

It seems that the function of the mind is to comprehend the diversity of experience: of the lower mind at its best, to discern its elements; of the higher, to synthesize its meaning. For the mind, to understand something, must make distinctions, realizing at the same time that those distinctions, even while they are illuminating, are not the reality itself. Further, there are different kinds of mental involvement, ranging from the casual attention characteristic of and appropriate to childhood to those moments when all the elements in a given situation are grasped and the mind is fully aware of their implications; and from times of comparative irresponsibility to occasions when consciousness of the consequences of a choice weighs heavily indeed. These progressively more complex confrontations with the diversities of embodied existence must have their correlation in a universal context as well, if analogy is the key to understanding nature. Thus universal mind must undergo progressive degrees of differentiation, from the most subtle to the most objective. But this range could not contain "the Absolute," since *That* is beyond all distinctions. As said in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 490):

> Ideas, in their very nature and essence, as conceptions bearing relation to objects, whether true or imaginary, are opposed to absolute THOUGHT, that unknowable ALL of whose mysterious operations Mr. Spencer predicates that nothing can be said, but that "it has no kinship of nature with Evolution" (*Principles of Psychology,* 474)—which it certainly has not.

So, to expect to encompass the infinite with the finite mind is to contemplate the impossible, even though our fundamental identity with the Absolute remains a fact. But another passage (*S.D.* II, 25) on the meaning of the Logos may help to clarify this question:

> . . . Man was regarded in several systems as the *third Logos.* The esoteric meaning of the word *Logos* (speech or word,

Verbum) is the rendering in objective expression, as in a photograph, of the concealed thought. The *Logos* is the mirror reflecting DIVINE MIND, and the Universe is the mirror of the Logos, though the latter is the *esse* of that Universe. As the *Logos* reflects *all* in the Universe of Pleroma, so man reflects in himself all that he sees and finds in *his* Universe, the Earth.

It seems from this that all beings in the universe reflect as much of the whole as their natures, each with its peculiar limitations, will permit. But since man is spoken of as the third Logos, perhaps he represents the most complex differentiation. Perhaps the meaning of being human is that one may choose with increasing awareness to reflect either the diversity or the unifying essence within. What H.P.B. says of the Monad is useful in this connection. She compares it to "an indestructible star of divine light and fire, thrown down on to our Earth as a plank of salvation for the personalities in which it indwells. It is for the latter to cling to it; and thus partaking of its divine nature, obtain immortality." This may be the means by which we reach toward awareness of our identity with the Absolute. The process of overcoming limitations, then, would be not a matter of eliminating them *per se,* but of transforming them into something else. If limitations could be regarded as a kind of matter, and if matter is tending to ever more-refined forms, then perhaps our limitations are re-formed as knowledge.

This is obviously a project which must span many lifetimes. In fact, time would not be a factor, whereas effort would be crucial. If matter is evolving toward self-consciousness, then the process of overcoming limitations might be thought of as exhausting old habits of perception and behavior, and either expending or replacing them with others more responsive to desire for the welfare of other human beings. Inasmuch as established habit-patterns, particularly mental ones, do not respond overnight to the impulses generated by new insights, reward and encouragement can be found only in the ability to sustain effort in the desired direction, and in confidence that every effort will bear its proper fruit in time. This must be the meaning of "a firm position assumed out of regard for the end in view."

The question arises: Why are the animal forms so varied while the human body is the same?

Madame Blavatsky states that human evolution is "through various *states* of *not only matter* but Self-consciousness and self-percep-

tion, or of *perception* from apperception." It follows that man's purpose is not to evolve a more perfect external form, but to learn to use the one already evolved, through which he may share self-consciously the experience of all other forms of life, to enlarge his sense of self to encompass them all.

Further, from a historical point of view, it does not appear that man has always used the same form. The account given of man's evolution in *The Secret Doctrine,* drawing upon archaic scriptures, indicates that man has lived on the earth in many different shapes and forms, some of them far less gross than his present body, but always consistent with the environment. There were times when forms were in an experimental stage and many of those then developed were discarded and unsuitable. It is also said that in the economy of nature no forms are completely destroyed but exist as archetypes on the plane of mind, and that the forms presently in use by the lower kingdoms of nature are in effect man's "cast off clothing." (*S.D.* II, 684.) It is also interesting that in the process of acquiring a new body, the embryo recapitulates in brief the "root-forms" of the lower kingdoms: "Moses is cited by the Kabalists as authority for the remark that it required earth and water to make a living being, and thus it may be said that man first appears as a stone." (*S.D.* II, 188.) At the end of a few weeks the embryo has assumed a shape resembling a carrot. It then develops from within itself characteristics of the animal kingdom—eyes, limbs, features. But its "Monad has not yet become either human or immortal, for the Kabalists tell us that this only occurs at the 'fourth hour.' One by one the foetus assumes the characteristics of the human being, the first flutter of the immortal breath passes through its being; it moves; and the divine essence settles in the infant frame, which it will inhabit until the moment of physical death, when man becomes a spirit."

So, while diversity of form can be thought of as a necessity of evolution in the lower kingdoms, the archetypal form of man is the most appropriate for subjective evolution—for exploring and mastering the varieties of other states of consciousness. Perhaps the variety apparent in the animal and plant and mineral kingdoms is reflected by man in the endless diversities of his psychic nature; one wears the mask on the outside, so to speak, and the other wears it on the inside.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

JESUS: *Buddha, Jesus, Apollonius*

THE primitive Christian community was composed of small groups scattered about and organized in secret societies, with passwords, grips, and signs. To avoid the relentless persecutions of their enemies, they were obliged to seek safety and hold meetings in deserted catacombs, the fastnesses of mountains, and other safe retreats. Like disabilities were naturally encountered by each religious reform at its inception. From the very first appearance of Jesus and his twelve disciples, we see them congregating apart, having secure refuges in the wilderness, and among friends in Bethany, and elsewhere. Were Christianity not composed of *"secret communities,"* from the start, history would have more *facts* to record of its founder and disciples than it has.

How little Jesus impressed his personality upon his own century, is calculated to astound the inquirer. Renan shows that Philo, who died toward the year 50, and who was born many years earlier than Jesus, living all the while in Palestine while the "glad tidings" were being preached all over the country, according to the Gospels, had never heard of him! Josephus, the historian, who was born three or four years after the death of Jesus, mentions his execution in a short sentence, and even those few words were altered "by a *Christian hand,*" says the author of the *Life of Jesus,* writing at the close of the first century, when Paul, the learned propagandist, is said to have founded so many churches; and Peter is alleged to have established the apostolic succession, which the Irenæo-Eusebian chronology shows to have already included three bishops of Rome: Linus, Anacletus, and Clement. Josephus, the painstaking enumerator and careful historian of even the most unimportant sects, entirely ignores the existence of a Christian sect. Suetonius, secretary of Adrian, writing in the first quarter of the second century, knows so little of Jesus or his history as to say that the Emperor Claudius "banished all the Jews, who were continually making disturbances,

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NOTE.—"The Christian Scheme," begun in November, 1967, is collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky. It recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

at the instigation of one *Crestus,"* meaning Christ, we must suppose. The Emperor Adrian himself, writing still later, was so little impressed with the tenets or importance of the new sect, that in a letter to Servianus he shows that he believes the Christians to be worshippers of Serapis. "In the second century," says C. W. King, "the syncretistic sects that had sprung up in Alexandria, the very hot-bed of Gnosticism, found out in Serapis a prophetic type of Christ as the Lord and Creator of all, and Judge of the living and the dead." Thus, while the "Pagan" philosophers had never viewed Serapis, or rather the abstract idea which was embodied in him, as otherwise than a representation of the Anima Mundi, the Christians anthropomorphized the "Son of God" and his "Father," finding no better model for him than the idol of a Pagan myth! "There can be no doubt," remarks the same author, "that the head of Serapis, marked, as the face is, by a grave and pensive majesty, supplied the first idea for the conventional portraits of the Saviour."[1]

In the notes taken by a traveller—whose episode with the monks on Mount Athos we have mentioned elsewhere—we find that, during his early life, Jesus had frequent intercourse with the Essenes belonging to the Pythagorean school, and known as the Koinobi. We believe it rather hazardous on the part of Renan to assert so dogmatically, as he does, that Jesus "ignored the very name of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Plato"; that he had never read a Greek nor a Buddhistic book, "although he had more than one element in him, which, unawares to himself, proceeded from Buddhism, Parsism, and the Greek wisdom." This is conceding half a miracle, and allowing as much to chance and coincidence. It is an abuse of privilege, when an author, who claims to write historical facts, draws convenient deductions from hypothetical premises, and then calls it a biography—a *Life* of Jesus. No more than any other compiler of legends concerning the problematical history of the Nazarene prophet, has Renan one inch of secure foothold upon which to maintain himself; nor can any one else assert a claim to the contrary, except in inferential evidence. And yet, while Renan has not one solitary fact to show that Jesus had never studied the metaphysical tenets of Buddhism and Parsism, or heard of the philosophy of Plato, his opponents have the best reasons in the world to suspect

[1] In Payne Knight's "Ancient Art and Mythology," Serapis is represented as wearing his hair long, "formally turned back and disposed in ringlets falling down upon his breast and shoulders like that of women. His whole person, too, is always enveloped in drapery reaching to his feet." This is the conventional picture of Christ.

the contrary. When they find that—1) all his sayings are in a Pythagorean spirit, when not *verbatim* repetitions; 2) his code of ethics is purely Buddhistic; 3) his mode of action and walk in life, Essenean; and 4) his mystical mode of expression, his parables, and his ways, those of an initiate, whether Grecian, Chaldean, or Magian (for the "Perfect," who spoke the *hidden* wisdom, were of the same school of archaic learning the world over), it is difficult to escape from the logical conclusion that he belonged to that same body of initiates. It is a poor compliment paid the Supreme, this forcing upon Him four gospels, in which, contradictory as they often are, there is not a single narrative, sentence, or peculiar expression, whose parallel may not be found in some older doctrine or philosophy. Surely, the Almighty—were it but to spare future generations their present perplexity—might have brought down with Him, at His *first and only* incarnation on earth, something original—something that would trace a distinct line of demarcation between Himself and the score or so of incarnate Pagan gods, who had been born of virgins, had all been saviours, and were either killed, or otherwise sacrificed themselves for humanity.

Too much has already been conceded to the emotional side of the story. What the world needs is a less exalted, but more faithful view of a personage, in whose favor nearly half of Christendom has dethroned the Almighty. It is not the erudite, world-famous scholar, whom we question for what we find in his *Vie de Jesus,* nor is it one of his *historical* statements. We simply challenge a few unwarranted and untenable assertions that have found their way past the emotional narrator, into the otherwise beautiful pages of the work—a life built altogether on mere probabilities, and yet that of one who, if accepted as an historical personage, has far greater claims upon our love and veneration, fallible as he is with all this greatness, than if we figure him as an omnipotent God. It is but in the latter character that Jesus must be regarded by every reverential mind as a failure.

Notwithstanding the paucity of old philosophical works now extant, we could find no end of instances of perfect identity between Pythagorean, Hindu, and New Testament sayings. There is no lack of proofs upon this point. What is needed is a Christian public that will examine what will be offered, and show common honesty in rendering its verdict. Bigotry has had its day, and done its worst. "We need not be frightened," says Professor Müller, "if we discover

traces of truth, traces even of Christian truth, among the sages and lawgivers of other nations."

Plato did not conceal the fact that he derived his best philosophical doctrines from Pythagoras, and that himself was merely the first to reduce them to systematic order, occasionally interweaving with them metaphysical speculations of his own. But Pythagoras himself got his recondite doctrines, first from the descendants of Mochus, and later, from the Brahmans of India. He was also initiated into the Mysteries among the hierophants of Thebes, the Persian and Chaldean Magi. Thus, step by step do we trace the origin of most of our Christian doctrines to Middle Asia. Drop out from Christianity the personality of Jesus, so sublime, because of its unparalleled simplicity, and what remains? History and comparative theology echo back the melancholy answer, "A crumbling skeleton formed of the oldest Pagan myths!"

While the mythical birth and life of Jesus are a faithful copy of those of the Brahmanical Christna, his historical character of a religious reformer in Palestine is the true type of Buddha in India. In more than one respect their great resemblance in philanthropic and spiritual aspirations, as well as external circumstances is truly striking. Though the son of a king, while Jesus was but a carpenter, Buddha was not of the high Brahmanical caste by birth. Like Jesus, he felt dissatisfied with the dogmatic spirit of the religion of his country, the intolerance and hypocrisy of the priesthood, their outward show of devotion, and their useless ceremonials and prayers. As Buddha broke violently through the traditional laws and rules of the Brahmans, so did Jesus declare war against the Pharisees, and the proud Sadducees. What the Nazarene did as a consequence of his humble birth and position, Buddha did as a voluntary penance. He travelled about as a beggar; and—again like Jesus—later in life he sought by preference the companionship of publicans and sinners. Each aimed at a social as well as at a religious reform; and giving a deathblow to the old religions of his countries, each became the founder of a new one.

"The reform of Buddha," says Max Müller, "had originally much more of a social than of a religious character. The most important element of Buddhist reform has always been its social and moral code, not its metaphysical theories. *That moral code is one of the most perfect which the world has ever known* . . . and he whose meditations had been how to deliver the soul of man from misery

and the fear of death, had delivered the people of India from a degrading thraldom and from priestly tyranny." Further, the lecturer adds that were it otherwise, "Buddha might have taught whatever philosophy he pleased, and we should hardly have heard his name. The people would not have minded him, and his system would only have been a drop in the ocean of philosophic speculation by which India was deluged at all times."

The same with Jesus. While Philo, whom Renan calls Jesus's elder brother, Hillel, Shammai, and Gamaliel, are hardly mentioned —Jesus has become a God! And still, pure and divine as was the moral code taught by Christ, it never could have borne comparison with that of Buddha, but for the tragedy of Calvary. That which helped forward the deification of Jesus was his dramatic death, the voluntary sacrifice of his life, alleged to have been made for the sake of mankind, and the later convenient dogma of the atonement, invented by the Christians. In India, where life is valued as of no account, the crucifixion would have produced little effect, if any.

Apollonius, a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, was, like him, an enthusiastic founder of a new spiritual school. Perhaps less metaphysical and more practical than Jesus, less tender and perfect in his nature, he nevertheless inculcated the same quintessence of spirituality, and the same high moral truths. His great mistake was to confine them too closely to the higher classes of society. While to the poor and the humble Jesus preached "Peace on earth and good will to men," Apollonius was the friend of kings, and moved with the aristocracy. He was born among the latter, and himself a man of wealth, while the "Son of man," representing the people, "had not where to lay his head"; nevertheless, the two "miracle-workers" exhibited striking similarity of purpose. Still earlier than Apollonius had appeared Simon Magus, called "the great Power of God." His "miracles" are both more wonderful, more varied, and better attested than those either of the apostles or of the Galilean philosopher himself. Materialism denies the fact in both cases, but history affirms. Apollonius followed both; and how great and renowned were his miraculous works in comparison with those of the alleged founder of Christianity as the kabalists claim, we have history again, and Justin Martyr, to corroborate.

Like Buddha and Jesus, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies and hypocrisy. If, like the Christian Saviour, the sage

of Tyana had by preference sought the companionship of the poor and humble; and if instead of dying comfortably, at over one hundred years of age, he had been a voluntary martyr, proclaiming divine Truth from a cross, his blood might have proved as efficacious for the subsequent dissemination of spiritual doctrines as that of the Christian Messiah.

The calumnies set afloat against Apollonius, were as numerous as they were false. So late as eighteen centuries after his death he was defamed by Bishop Douglas in his work against miracles. In this the Right Reverend bishop crushed himself against historical facts. If we study the question with a dispassionate mind, we will soon perceive that the ethics of Gautama-Buddha, Plato, Apollonius, Jesus, Ammonius Sakkas, and his disciples, were all based on the same mystic philosophy. That all worshipped one God, whether they considered Him as the "Father" of humanity, who lives in man as man lives in Him, or as the Incomprehensible Creative Principle; all led God-like lives.

When Apollonius of Tyana desired to hear the "small voice," he used to wrap himself up entirely in a mantle of fine wool, on which he placed both his feet, after having performed certain magnetic passes, and pronounced not the "name" but an invocation well known to every adept. Then he drew the mantle over his head and face, and his translucid or astral spirit was free. On ordinary occasions he wore wool no more than the priests of the temples. The possession of the secret combination of the "name" gave the hierophant supreme power over every being, human or otherwise, inferior to himself in soul-strength.

We cannot too often repeat that it is only through the doctrines of the more ancient philosophies that the religion preached by Jesus may be understood. It is through Pythagoras, Confucius, and Plato, that we can comprehend the idea which underlies the term "Father" in the New Testament. Plato's ideal of the Deity, whom he terms the one everlasting, invisible God, the Fashioner and Father of all things, is rather the "Father" of Jesus. It is this Divine Being of whom the Grecian sage says that He can neither be envious nor the originator of evil, for He can produce nothing but what is good and just, is certainly not the Mosaic Jehovah, the *"jealous* God," but the God of Jesus, who "alone is good." He extols His all-embracing, divine power, and His omnipotence, but at the same time intimates that, as He is unchangeable, He can never desire to change his laws,

i.e., to extirpate evil from the world through a miracle. He is omniscient, and nothing escapes His watchful eye. His justice, which we find embodied in the law of compensation and retribution, will leave no crime without punishment, no virtue without its reward; and therefore he declares that the only way to honor God is to cultivate moral purity. He utterly rejects not only the anthropomorphic idea that God could have a material body, but "rejects with disgust those fables which ascribe passions, quarrels, and crimes of all sorts to the minor gods." He indignantly denies that God allows Himself to be propitiated, or rather bribed, by prayers and sacrifices.

The *Phædrus* of Plato displays all that man once was, and that which he may yet become again. "Before man's spirit sank into sensuality and was embodied with it through the loss of his wings, he lived among the gods in the airy [spiritual] world where everything is true and pure." In the *Timæus* he says that "there was a time when mankind did not perpetuate itself, but lived as pure spirits." In the future world, says Jesus, "they neither marry nor are given in marriage," but "live as the angels of God in Heaven."

The researches of Laboulaye, Anquetil Duperron, Colebrooke, Barthelemy St. Hilaire, Max Müller, Spiegel, Burnouf, Wilson, and so many other linguists, have brought some of the truth to light. And now that the difficulties of the Sanscrit, the Tibetan, the Singhalese, the Zend, the Pehlevi, the Chinese, and even of the Burmese, are partially conquered, and the *Vedas,* and the *Zend-Avesta,* the Buddhist texts, and even Kapila's *Sûtras* are translated, a door is thrown wide open, which, once passed, must close forever behind any speculative or ignorant calumniators of the old religions. Even till the present time, the clergy have, to use the words of Max Müller—"generally appealed to the deviltries and orgies of heathen worship . . . but they have seldom, if ever, endeavored to discover the true and original character of the strange forms of faith and worship which they call the work of the devil." When we read the true history of Buddha and Buddhism, by Müller, and the enthusiastic opinions of both expressed by Barthelemy St. Hilaire, and Laboulaye; and when, finally, a Popish missionary, an eye-witness, and one who least of all can be accused of partiality to the Buddhists—the Abbé Huc, we mean—finds occasion for nothing but admiration for the high individual character of these "devil-worshippers"; we must consider Sakyâ-muni's philosophy as something more than the religion of fetishism and atheism, which the Catholics would have

us believe it. Huc was a missionary and it was his first duty to regard Buddhism as no better than an outgrowth of the worship of Satan. The poor Abbé was struck off the list of missionaries at Rome, after his book of travels was published. This illustrates how little we may expect to learn the truth about the religions of other people, through missionaries, when their accounts are first revised by the superior ecclesiastical authorities, and the former severely punished for telling the truth.

When these men who have been and still are often termed "the obscene ascetics," the devotees of different sects of India in short, generally termed "Yogi," were asked by Marco Polo, "how it comes that they are not ashamed to go stark naked as they do?" they answered the inquirer of the thirteenth century as a missionary of the nineteenth was answered. "We go naked," they say, "because naked we came into the world, and we desire to have nothing about us that is of this world. Moreover, we have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of, and therefore, we are not ashamed of our nakedness any more than you are to show your hand or your face. You who are conscious of the sins of the flesh, do well to have shame, and to cover your nakedness."

One could make a curious list of the excuses and explanations of the clergy to account for similarities daily discovered between Romanism and heathen religions. Yet the summary would invariably lead to one sweeping claim: The doctrines of Christianity were plagiarized by the Pagans the world over! Plato and his older Academy stole the ideas from the Christian revelation—said the Alexandrian Fathers!! The Brahmans and Manu borrowed from the Jesuit missionaries, and the *Bhagavad-gita* was the production of Father Calmet, who transformed Christ and John into Christna and Arjuna to fit the Hindu mind!! The trifling fact that Buddhism and Platonism both antedated Christianity, and the *Vedas* had already degenerated into Brahmanism before the days of Moses, makes no difference. The same with regard to Apollonius of Tyana. Although his thaumaturgical powers could not be denied in the face of the testimony of emperors, their courts, and the populations of several cities; and although few of these had ever heard of the Nazarene prophet whose "miracles" had been witnessed by a few apostles only, whose very individualities remain to this day a problem in history, yet Apollonius has to be accepted as the "monkey of Christ."

If of really pious, good, and honest men, many are yet found

among the Catholic, Greek, and Protestant clergy, whose sincere faith has the best of their reasoning powers, and who having never been among heathen populations, are unjust only through ignorance, it is not so with the missionaries. The invariable subterfuge of the latter is to attribute to demonolatry the really Christ-like life of the Hindu and Buddhist ascetics and many of the lamas. Years of sojourn among "heathen" nations, in China, Tartary, Thibet, and Hindustan have furnished them with ample evidence how unjustly the so-called idolators have been slandered. The missionaries have not even the excuse of sincere faith to give the world that they mislead; and, with very few exceptions, one may boldly paraphrase the remark made by Garibaldi, and say that: *"A priest knows himself to be an impostor, unless he be a fool, or have been taught to lie from boyhood."*

EDUCATION—A MORAL ENTERPRISE

The educator of the past was concerned with the total formation of man. He was obliged to ask what a man should know and to devise methods of instructing his mind. He was obliged to ask what a man should do and to implement methods of instructing his character. He was obliged to ask: What may man hope for? and to define principles by which to educate his belief. The process of defining the principles and methods by which man's reason, virtue, and belief were shaped was regarded as education; and only when a student was able to think intelligently about the same questions was he regarded as educated.

Education was a moral enterprise. The morality of man's life consisted less in his attention to the mores and customs of his times than in the training of his mind and habits of action in order that his fellow man and his society might be illumined. The intellectual virtues were practiced in order that the truth might be apprehended and the practical virtues were exhibited in order that the truth might reign in a just society.

—ARTHUR A. COHEN

on the lookout

Humanism—One View

A page of report and discussion in the *National Observer* for Sept. 1 is devoted to the present-day thinking and activities of Humanists and "atheist" groups. The *Observer* writer, Terence Shea, begins with conclusions drawn from an interview with James Curry, a white-haired Washington, D.C. attorney who gives most of his time to furthering humanist causes in the courts. Weaned of Catholicism by reading Thomas Paine in his student days, Mr. Curry regards "humanism" as a polite word for atheism. The article summarizes his view of the outlook of humanists:

> They call God a myth and religion a fraud, and they say that no rational man can reach any other conclusions. They argue that man will be freer and society will be better after the death of institutionalized religion, which they say not only is overdue but now appears imminent. "In a few years," Mr. Curry declares, "we'll think no more of God and the pope than we think of the authority of the Queen of England."

"Practical Atheism"

Even if many unbelievers call themselves "agnostics," they are, Mr. Curry believes, "practical atheists," because "they live as if there is no God, or at least no God in man's world." Even the churches have been penetrated by sophisticated forms of atheism. While, according to a Gallop Poll, 98 per cent of Americans say they believe in God, many millions, Mr. Curry maintains, would deny the existence of a personal God. Further:

> Theologians and churchmen seem to be writing and talking more than ever about the shades of nonbelief, indicating that practical atheism is a bigger problem for religionists than some figures show. . . . Says Mr. Curry: "There are more atheists in pulpits than in atheist organizations."
>
> They [the humanists] base their contention that atheism is growing—and they vindicate their nonbelief—on such church problems as the volume of dissent against doctrines and traditions, the shrinking of clergymen's ranks, the financial plights of most churches, the widespread indifference to religion, and even the religionists' attempts to know more about atheism.

Influence of Whitehead

Mr. Shea's article samples humanist opinion from a variety of sources. There are still expressions of old-fashioned "atheism" arguing from the premises of scientific materialism. "Religion was once an honest expression," one man said, but it was found to be a deceit, with only science giving "positive answers." However, Howard Parsons, head of the philosophy department at the University of Bridgeport, probably reflects the predominant trend among humanists in preferring to regard himself as a "naturalist." Learned in philosophy, Dr. Parsons is drawn to the ideas of Alfred North Whitehead:

> Whitehead, says Dr. Parsons, rejected the anthropomorphic sense of God but regarded him as the supreme creator, the ultimate moral principle dividing good from evil, incomplete and continually growing, not knowing all things, not all-powerful, a deity "doing the best he can in the face of the disparateness of the creatures."
>
> The nearest that Dr. Parsons comes to talking about any God is when he says: " 'God' unfortunately is a noun. 'Divine' is a more appropriate term because it applies to a certain kind of process, or energy, or activity of the whole process of creation on our planet in which men are supporting other men and the environment. Religious leaders recognize this as subversive. If everything is process, then it creates problems with Scriptures."
>
> He contends that "events are moving toward secularism and humanism," and that the movement is gaining speed.

Price of Unbelief

Humanists are indeed watchful guardians of the separation between church and state, and excellent critics of the old presumptions to authority by spokesmen of orthodox religion, yet not many of them take into account the sterilizing effect of a narrow scientism. Nor is there any mention in this article of the recent appearance of a new quarterly magazine, *Religious Humanism,* devoted, not to revival of the god-idea, but to inquiry into values which may have been overlooked by a purely scientific humanism. Science was an excellent weapon for attack on the abuses of organized religion, but today a more mature humanism recognizes the impossibility of building deep humanistic conviction with iconoclastic weapons alone. This becomes clear from a passage in a new book by Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture* (Doubleday, 1969, published also as an Anchor paperback), in which the author indi-

cates the price paid for the crushing triumph of science over traditional forms of religious belief:

> It was exactly this tendency of institutionalized religion to indulge in self-seeking obscurantism and authoritarian manipulation which led to the series of great revolts against the churches of the West that culminated in the militant secularism of the Enlightenment. But in the process of throwing off the obscurantists, the very idea of mystery was radically altered. Mystery, as it was known in primordial rite and ritual, as it was experienced in the sacraments of the mystery cults, had stood as a boundary defining man's proper station in the world. It was that which was sacred and taught man wise limitations. The existence of mystery in this sense—as the non-human dimension of reality which was not to be tampered with but to be revered—served to enrich the lives of men by confronting them with a realm of inexhaustible wonder. With the appearance of scientific skepticism, however, the mysterious came to be either a tricky puzzle to be solved or a guilty secret to be exposed. In either case, the mystery came to be seen as an intolerable barrier to reason and justice. Since the sacred had become the mask of scoundrels and frauds, away then with the sacred! *Ecrasez l'infame!*

No Nourishment in Disinfectants!

Interestingly, Mr. Roszak also turns to Whitehead, but for diagnosis of materialistic excess:

> As Alfred North Whitehead observes, "the common sense of the eighteenth century . . . acted on the world like a bath of moral cleansing." But what the heroic skeptics and principled agnostics of that age did not anticipate was the fact that "if men cannot live on bread alone, still less can they do so on disinfectants." Even more tragically, they did not foresee the possibility, indeed the inevitability, that the scientific world view might well be corrupted by the same kind of bad magic that had turned Christianity into the bulwark of exploitive privilege. Yet science and technology, with their relentless insistence on specialization and expertise, were themselves to come full circle and be transformed into as closed a priesthood as any in history.

Diminished Man

The cult of objectivity, of external certainty, has indeed diminished man's idea of himself, and hence dwarfed his sense of his own potentialities. A true humanism, then, would help to restore man's faith in himself, and if the superior manipulative skills of a scientific technology have reduced the prestige of manipulative religion to almost a cipher, there is still the crucial question to be answered: Who and what is Man? Mr. Roszak writes to this point:

> When we challenge the finality of objective consciousness as a basis for culture, what is at issue is the size of man's life. We must insist that a culture which negates or subordinates or degrades visionary experience commits the sin of diminishing our existence. Which is precisely what happens when we insist that reality is limited to what objective consciousness can turn into the stuff of science and of technical manipulation. The fact and dire cost of this diminishing is nothing that can be adequately proved by what I write here, for it is an experience which every man must find in his own life. . . .

Tolstoy's Conception

> But of this there can be no doubt: that in dealing with the reality our non-intellective powers grasp, *there are no experts*. . . . Tolstoy was convinced that the moment came in the experience of self-sacrifice to one's fellows, no matter how inconsequential and obscure the act. The homely magic of such turning points waits for us all and will find us if we will let it. . . . When a man has *seen* and has *spoken* as such men did, the criticisms of the objective consciousness fade into insignificance. What men of this kind invite us to do is to grow as great with experience as they have, and in so doing to find the nobility they have known. Compared with the visionary powers that moved in these souls, what is the value of all the minor exactitudes of all the experts on earth?

This is a Humanism rooted in the Renaissance ideal of Pico della Mirandola, conceiving Man as the being who indeed makes and endlessly remakes himself, and is responsible to himself for doing so. It is a matrix in Western thought entirely hospitable to the idea of man as a reincarnating ego, with primary inspiration in universal ethics.

Necessary Reforms

It is of interest that contemporary writers who still hope for the emergence of a better order of society based upon the genius of modern technology are beginning to insist that such changes cannot take place without reforms in the way human beings think of themselves. Brief evidence of this attitude is provided by Donald Michael's review of *Technological Man* by Victor C. Ferkiss (in *Science* for July 11). The chief concern of the author, the reviewer points out, is "whether, or to what extent, a new technological civilization and a new type, technological man, is arising out of the womb of contemporary industrial society." In view of the fact that the major contributions of industrial society have been (1) "large-scale production and consumption of material goods"; (2) "alienation from

and war against nature"; (3) "repression of the instincts for play or contemplation or their sublimation into competitive channels"; and, (4) "above all, competition and war," these reforms are proposed:

> Ferkiss argues that if there is to be a new technological civilization man will live by three basic principles: The first is "the new naturalism"—the principle that man is absolutely a part of a nature, a universe, that is always in process of becoming. The second principle, "the new holism," recognizes that "no part can be defined or understood save in relation to the whole." The third, "the new immanentism," sees that the whole is "determined not from outside but from within." These principles and their applications, which Ferkiss examines in some philosophical and operational detail, "provide the necessary basis for the outlook that must come to dominate society if man is to survive the existential revolution already under way."

While these principles are referred to as "new," they may be recognized as very old indeed, when stated abstractly. What may be novel about them, on the other hand, is their separation from working corollaries such as the doctrines of reincarnation and Karma, which filled such abstractions with concrete meaning for men of the distant past. Even so, the formulation of such principles is an encouraging sign, providing one more instance of the search of thoughtful men for philosophical guidelines in an age beset by the confusions of a feverish industrialism.

"Unique to Man"

An article in the *London Observer* for Aug. 10 describes what is termed "The Chomsky Revolution," by which is meant the impact of the ideas of Noam Chomsky, professor of linguistics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on all areas of study concerned directly or indirectly with language and grammar. The writer, John Davy, says:

> The essence of the situation, perhaps, is this: prompted by Chomsky, many people have suddenly begun to notice that the ability to acquire and use language is a very much more extraordinary thing than we had realized: that it appears to be unique to man; and that in exploring this ability, we are led to postulate some very remarkable and still obscure capacities of mind, which may also demand some quite new ideas about the functioning of the brain.
>
> In this connection, Chomsky (now joined by many allies) has launched a tremendous onslaught on behavioristic psychology, which has dominated a great deal of experimental psychology for

half a century, and the repercussions are being felt in the citadels of linguistic philosophy. . . .

The central problem in describing the Chomsky revolution lies in what he has himself called the difficulty of establishing "psychic distance" from something which is as close to us as language, and hence very familiar. We all use language all the time, and normally lose all sense of what extraordinary feats we are performing.

Man and Machine

One way of illuminating these feats is by noting the differences between a human being and a computer:

> We hear, every day, thousands of new sentences which we have never heard before, without any difficulty in understanding them (indeed we get bored and impatient with speech or writing that is full of sentences we *have* heard before, i.e., clichés). Computers, by contrast, can *only* cope with *clichés*.

Obviously, the presence of *mind,* the manasic principle—the organizing, relating, comprehending intelligence—is at issue, here, and the attempt to make a computer duplicate mental capacities throws the reality of the mind-being into high relief. The comparison leads to other conclusions:

> The startling implication is that children are born already equipped with a "knowledge" of language—that what linguists are gradually discovering as "universal grammar" is really a way of describing a complex inborn capacity, an innate idea of language. The child then learns the particular language of its environment by relating what it hears to its unconscious knowledge of the structure which underlies all languages. This may help to explain not only how children learn how to speak at all, but the fact that they learn Bantu, Russian, English or Japanese with equal facility. They can also learn in the teeth of enormous handicaps—deaf-and-dumb parents, impoverished homes, partial deafness.

No "Physical" Explanation

This article continues at length, making a valiant attempt to clarify Prof. Chomsky's ideas for the general reader. The Chomsky "revolution" is apparently some ten years old, dating from publication of his book, *Syntactic Structures,* which some readers declared brought them the quality of a "mystical experience." Chomsky, however, emphasizes that only the barest beginning has been made in discovering the roots of language capacity in human beings. Mr. Davy writes:

> The present vivid realization that language would never be learned at all without some elaborate inborn "competence" has opened the way to study of language as a "mirror of consciousness," as a way of exploring some of the operating principles of mind.
>
> Chomsky believes that we are still very far from seeing what these principles are, as far as language is concerned. Indeed he claims that "the processes by which the human mind achieved its present stage of complexity and its particular form of innate organization are a total mystery." He even questions whether Darwinian natural selection processes can possibly account for the emergence of these language facilities in human evolution, and doubts whether phenomena of mind can be accounted for by any physical processes in the brain which we yet know of. It may become necessary, he says, to conceive of some quite new principles.

Or some very old ones!

Life—even in "Space"?

A report in the *New York Times* (March 21) that astronomers have detected the presence in the Milky Way of a substance which is believed to be necessary to the beginning of life may have far-reaching implications. The observations of radio emissions, made by the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank, West Virginia, were briefly described by the *Times* reporter:

> The substance is formaldehyde. The discovery reinforces the growing suspicion that evolution of the complex chemistry of life, as it exists on earth, began in space between the stars.
>
> In recent months two other substances needed as chemicals for starting that evolution have been detected in distant space by similar means. They are water vapor and ammonia.

The discovery of these substances adds weight to the steadily growing mass of evidence that life exists in other parts of the universe. The gradual liberation from scientific dogmatism does indeed seem to proceed little by little, until, as H.P.B. predicted, outgrown ideas are toppled by "the ninth wave of common sense."

Continuous Continental Change

Science Journal for July reports that the northwestern section of the British Isles is steadily rising while the southeastern part is sinking. In 1953, Hartmut Valentin, a geographer specializing in coastal movements, calculated by studying the tidal changes that the southern coast of England is sinking at about the rate of three millimeters

a year, or 30 cm. every 100 years. In 1965 D. M. Churchill arrived at similiar conclusions by measuring the movement of peat deposits formed at sea level some 6500 years ago. Since peat is formed from plants, it contains carbon and is subject to measurement of its age by radiocarbon techniques. Other evidences that the crust of the earth is in a state of continual flux are to be found under the City of London (the ancient nucleus of modern London), which has been the site of human habitation for over 2,000 years:

> Underneath the existing City of London there are abundant remains of Roman civilization, of which the Temple of Mithras, discovered during the construction of Bucklersbury House in 1953-54, was an outstanding example. The Borough of Southwark is another area in which abundant finds of pottery of Roman date have been made. The significant fact here is that the pottery was found at a level now 1.5-2.0 m. below the high water mark, clearly indicating that large areas of London have sunk since Roman times. In fact, the banks of the Thames are probably entirely post-Roman and were built when Southwark and similar tracts of riverside land became increasingly liable to flooding.

Other Evidence

The implications for the City of London are immediate as well as far-reaching. Although at its present rate of subsidence the City would not be completely inundated for at least 1500 to 4500 years, rising of land in the north has exposed coal seams whose exploitation has certainly had widespread economic and social effects. H. P. Blavatsky notes that minor cataclysmic changes as well as gradual elevation and subsidence of lands are part of the experience and records of all nations. She writes:

> Huxley has shown that the British islands have been four times depressed beneath the ocean and subsequently raised again and peopled. . . . The Sahara was the basin of a Miocene sea. Within the last five or six thousand years the shores of Sweden, Denmark and Norway have risen from 200 to 600 feet; in Scotland there are raised beaches with outlying stacks and skerries *surmounting* the shore now eroded by the hungry wave. The North of Europe is still rising from the sea and South America presents the phenomenon of raised beaches of over 1,000 miles in length, now at a height varying from 100 to 1,300 feet above the sea-level. On the other hand, the coast of Greenland is sinking fast, so much so that the Greenlander will not build by the shore. (*S.D.* II, 787 fn.)

"Fierce Bellicosity"

In an article in the *New Yorker* for March 22, Edmund Wilson takes note of the contrast between the Nazarenes of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their "Teacher of Righteousness," and the spirit of Jesus in the Gospels:

> Now, no responsible writer has ever denied the differences between, on the one hand, the views attributed to Jesus in the Gospels, with their acceptance of the poor and proscribed, their preaching of love and forgiveness, as well as Paul's opening the Faith to the Gentiles, and, on the other hand, the theology of a narrow Jewish sect who regarded themselves as an élite—though they sometimes speak cordially of "the simple"—and the apparently fierce bellicosity of their Teacher of Righteousness. Though the Messianic literature of the Sect does seem to prepare the way for the appearance of some such figure as Jesus—it must always be remembered that *Christ* is simply the Greek for *Messiah*; that is, the *Anointed One*—and though some of its words and conceptions are to be found in the literature of Christianity, the divergences are . . . plain between the scrolls and the sayings of Jesus, with no unmistakable bridge from one to the other, . . .

Heresy Within a Heresy

In *Isis Unveiled* (II, 130 ff.), Madame Blavatsky discusses the relationship of Jesus and also of John the Baptist to the Nazarene sect and its numerous branches. While Jesus seems to have been connected with both the Nazarenes and Essenes, he was apparently more of a reformer than a follower of either sect. Perhaps a clue to the differences noticed by Mr. Wilson may be found in the following quotation from *Isis Unveiled*:

> The oldest Nazarenes, who were the descendants of the Scripture *nazars,* and whose last prominent leader was John the Baptist, although never very orthodox in the sight of the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem were, nevertheless, respected and left unmolested. Even Herod "feared the multitude" because they regarded John as a prophet (Matthew xiv. 5). But the followers of Jesus evidently adhered to a sect which became a still more exasperating thorn in their side. It appeared as a heresy *within* another heresy; for while the nazars of the olden times, the "Sons of the Prophets," were Chaldean kabalists, the adepts of the new dissenting sect showed themselves reformers and innovators from the first.

"Buddhist Missionaries"

> The great similitude traced by some critics between the rites and observances of the earliest Christians and those of the Es-

> senes may be accounted for without the slightest difficulty. The Essenes, as we remarked just now, were the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judea at one time, since the reign of Asoka the zealous propagandist; and while it is evidently to the Essenes that belongs the honor of having had the Nazarene reformer, Jesus, as a pupil, still the latter is found disagreeing with his early teachers on several questions of formal observance. He cannot strictly be called an Essene, for reasons which we will indicate further on, neither was he a nazar, or Nazaria of the older sect. What Jesus *was,* may be found in the *Codex Nazaraeus,* in the unjust accusations of the Bardesanian Gnostics.
>
> "Jesus is *Nebu,* the false Messiah, the destroyer of the old orthodox religion," says the *Codex.* He is the founder of the sect of the new nazars, and as the words clearly imply, a follower of the Buddhist doctrine.

One indication of the nature of the mission of the Nazarene reformer may be found in the statement by H. P. Blavatsky that although it would be extremely difficult to determine which of these sects Jesus belonged to, "what is self-evident is that he preached the philosophy of Buddha-Sakyamuni." This is evidence which places him in select, if not indeed, unique company.

More Brain Research

In the view of the Lodge, wrote Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy,* "the human brain is an exhaustless generator of force." Recent studies by scientists are bringing to light evidence of this. For example, in the Los Angeles *Times* (Dec. 24, 1968), a science writer, Irving Bengelsdorf, called the brain an "electrical chemical engine" composed of "10 billion nerve cells called neurons and about 100 billion other cells called glia—110 billion functioning components packed into the size of the human head." This is a "wow" sort of scientific story, which gains its impressiveness from figures and puzzles rather than explicit meaning. Yet some of the facts seem worth repeating:

> The brain's constant electro-chemical activity not only informs us of the external universe that surrounds us but also monitors and regulates the internal environment within us. . . . While the brain accounts for only 2 per cent of an adult's body weight, it uses up more than 20 per cent of the oxygen breathed in. . . . It takes just as much oxygen to think in an irrational manner as it does to think rationally.